

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 036312 TOSEC 020075
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:WES

APPROVED BY NEA: S. SOBER

D: MR. CHRISTOPHER (SUBS)

PM:MR. WINSHIP (SUBS)

T: MR. LEDOGAR (SUBS)

NEA/IAI: MR. STERNBERG

SPRS: MR. BROWN (SUBS)

WHITE HOUSE: MR. SHECTER (SUBS)

S/S:A. OTTO

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 036312 TOSEC 020075

EXDIS FOR THE SECRETARY THROUGH ATHERTON FROM SOBER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: QUESTION'S AND ANSWER'S ON
SALE OF CBU'S TO ISRAEL (S/S NO. 7704546)

1. ISSUE. THE WHITE HOUSE PLANS TO ANNOUNCE ABOUT NOON EST
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17 THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO DENY THE
SALE OF CBU'S TO ISRAEL. THE NSC HAS PREPARED Q'S AND
A'S FOR THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS SECRETARY TO USE, AND SAID
IT WOULD WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

2. FOLLOWING ARE Q'S AND A'S RECEIVED FROM THE NSC:

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Q: HAS A DECISION BEEN MADE ON THE SALE OF CONCUSSION
BOMBS TO ISRAEL?

A: YES. THE DECISION HAS BEEN MADE NOT TO SELL CONCUSSION
BOMBS TO ISRAEL. THIS DECISION SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED
AS DIRECTED SIMPLY TOWARD ISRAEL. WE HAVE NO INTENTION
OF SELLING THESE WEAPONS TO ANY OTHER NATION AND IN FACT

WE ARE REASSESSING THE NEED TO RETAIN THESE WEAPONS IN OUR OWN INVENTORY.

Q: DOES THIS DECISION, COMING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DECISION NOT TO PERMIT ISRAEL TO SELL THE KFIR FIGHTER TO ECUADOR, SUGGEST A BASIC CHANGE IN THE U.S. SECURITY RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL?

A: NO. THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN ON THE BASIS THAT IT WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY ENDANGER ISRAEL'S SECURITY. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS LEFT NO DOUBT ABOUT HIS COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY AND SURVIVAL OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL. THAT COMMITMENT HAS NOT CHANGED.

Q: WILL THIS DECISION AFFECT THE OTHER ITEMS WHICH PRESIDENT FORD OFFERED TO ISRAEL AT THE SAME TIME (126 M60 TANKS, 94 155 MM HOWITZERS AND FORWARD-LOOKING INFRA-RED (FLIR) DEVICES)?

A: THE OTHER ITEMS ARE QUITE DIFFERENT IN NATURE, BUT THEY HAVE NOT YET BEEN FORWARDED TO THE PRESIDENT FOR APPROVAL. THIS DECISION DOES NOT PREJUDGE THE REMAINDER OF THE PACKAGE IN ANY WAY.

Q: PRESIDENT FORD ANNOUNCED APPROVAL OF THIS SALE JUST BEFORE THE ELECTIONS. IS THAT WHY IT IS BEING TURNED DOWN NOW?

A: THE ISSUE WAS REVIEWED ON ITS MERITS.

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3. WE HAVE NOTED TO NSC STAFF OUR CONCERN OVER PROPOSED ANSWER TO THIRD QUESTION ABOVE. FAILURE TO REAFFIRM POSITIVE DECISION ON SALE OF TANKS AND HOWITZERS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH REVERSAL OF PREVIOUS DECISION ON CBU'S, COULD RAISE BROADER QUESTIONS CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS SUPPLY POLICY FOR ISRAEL. AS YOU WILL RECALL, NEA AND PM HAD RECOMMENDED THAT TANKS AND HOWITZERS BE APPROVED.

4. FOLLOWING ARE SUPPLEMENTARY Q'S AND A'S WE ARE PROPOSING TO PROVIDE TO DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN:

Q: THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN TOLD US THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT MAKE A DECISION ON THE CBU SALE BEFORE CONSULTING WITH CONGRESS. WILL YOU TELL US WITH WHOM THE ADMINISTRATION CONSULTED AND WHAT WAS THE RESULT OF THE CONSULTATION?

A: THE SECRETARY AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF DISCUSSED THIS SALE WITH SEVERAL SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES. THEIR VIEWS WERE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

Q: CAN YOU TELL US WITH WHICH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS THE MATTER WAS DISCUSSED?

A: WE DO NOT NORMALLY GO INTO DETAIL ON THIS AND I SEE NO REASON I SEE NO REASON TO BREAK THE RULE AT THIS TIME.

Q: CAN YOU CHARACTERIZE THE GENERAL VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS?

A: WE HEARD VARIOUS VIEWS ABOUT THE DESIRABILITY OF THE SALE. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO GO INTO SPECIFICS.

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Q: HAVE YOU NOTIFIED THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL?

A: THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAS BEEN NOTIFIED.

Q: WHAT WAS THEIR REACTION?

A: I BELIEVE THAT IS A QUESTION THE ISRAELI EMBASSY WOULD HAVE TO ANSWER.

Q: HAS THE ADMINISTRATION MADE A DECISION ON THE FORWARD-LOOKING INFRA-RED RADAR (FLIR)?

A: THE SALE OF THE FLIR SYSTEM IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. THAT YOU INDICATE YOUR DESIRE THAT THE ANSWER TO THE THIRD NSC QUESTION REFLECT A POSITIVE DECISION REGARDING THE SALE TO ISRAEL OF TANKS AND HOWITZERS.

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

B. THAT YOU APPROVE THE REMAINING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AS WRITTEN.

APPROVE

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

OTHER

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/P:EOJONES

APPROVED : NEA: S. SOBER

CLEARANCES: D: MR. CHRISTOPHER; PM: MR. WINSHIP

T: MR. LEDOGAR; NEA/IAI: MR. STERNBERG

SPRS: MR. BROWN; WHITE HOUSE: MR. SHECTER

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Message Attributes

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